

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. Normally, I don't try to amend resolutions because they are relatively meaningless anyway, but I think this is putting us on record on something that is relatively important. I do have a difficulty, and I understand why the wording was done that way by Senators Baack and Hillman because of their interest in Scottsbluff, but I think when we start narrowizing and narrowing locations and geographic locations, specifically, by saying Panhandle, that we are getting a little bit out of bounds what we need to do on the resolution. In essence, what we need to be saying by the Legislature, if we are going to approve a resolution of this nature, is to say, number one, there is a problem with Columbus, the automated, as far as pilots in central and western part of the state. Actually, there is sometimes problem in Omaha and Lincoln with the Columbus flight service station, simply because sometimes it is difficult to get in and get what is needed. Years ago, for the body's background, years ago we used to have flight service stations across the State of Nebraska. We had those in Lincoln. We had them in Grand Island. We had them in North Platte. There was one in Scottsbluff, and there may have been one in Columbus at one time or another, I am not sure. And those were by the federal government closed gradually and they were all consolidated, not only in Columbus for the Nebraska area, but in other states as well. So anyone in Nebraska who wants a weather briefing, such as I did this morning, flying in through the thunderstorm and lightnings, you call and you get Columbus and you talk to somebody in Columbus. One of the things that we tried to do in Nebraska for years is to fight the federal government in trying to keep the flight service stations opened, not only in North Platte, not only in Grand island, but in Scottsbluff as well, but the government at the federal level was determined to save money, to consolidate. Now, apparently, and rightly so, they have begun to reconsider and they have begun to say, you know, maybe what some of the people were saying out in Nebraska was true a few years ago, maybe we shouldn't have closed all of those because there is a big difference in climatic weather at geographic locations in Scottsbluff, North Platte, and Grand Island, and what have you. Maybe there are some things that happen so quickly out there, that when the weather is an hour old and a pilot calls in, that they could be getting into some trouble. So the federal government is now saying that there probably needs to be another flight service station out in the western part of the State of Nebraska. My amendment simply says, let's don't get specific of Panhandle,